



GALLERY NEWS

**WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON
GALLERY OF ART
MARY ATKINS MUSEUM
OF FINE ARTS**

Rockhill Road at Forty-fifth Street

Kansas City, Missouri

Open week days 10 a. m. to 5 p. m.
Free Days—Saturday, Sunday, Public Holidays and Wednesday Evenings, October thru May. Sunday and Holiday Hours—2 p. m. to 6 p. m.

Closed:
All Mondays
New Years, July 4th
Thanksgiving and Christmas



THE CAULDRON OF KING CH'ENG

GALLERY NEWS

October 1941

LOAN EXHIBITIONS:

PAINTINGS BY FLETCHER MARTIN: In honor of his appointment as Head of the Department of Painting at the Art Institute, the Gallery is staging a one-man exhibition of the work of Fletcher Martin. This will be open on Sunday, September 23rd, and continue through the month of October.

Martin is one of the younger painters from the West, yet he has already won the acclaim of critics and collectors. In an article entitled "Fletcher Martin, Painter of Memories" in the October, 1940 PARNASSUS, Peyton Boswell, Jr., speaks of Martin as the most vitally creative of the ever-increasing body of new talent that has come out of the West in recent years. Copies of this interesting and informative article will be placed in the loan galleries.

The exhibition will be perhaps the most comprehensive of the work of Martin that has been held to date. It will show him, not only as a commentator on the contemporary American scene, but also as a sensitive portraitist and will include a series of his fine pen drawings, gouaches and prints. Such well-known subjects as his great rodeo painting, "July 4, 5, 6th", the bruising "Lad from the Fleet", the raucous and humorous "Celebration", the almost romantic "Home from the Sea" will be in the exhibition. Several of his most recent paintings of this summer, subjects that grew out of his enthusiasm for the bull fights he saw in the City of Mexico, will be included and shown for the first time.

Martin is already represented in several museums. One of the first to purchase him was the Museum of Modern Art of New York City which bought his "Trouble in Frisco", a dramatic comment on the protracted longshoremen strike on the San Francisco waterfront. Soon after, the Metropolitan Museum added his sensitive "Juliet" to its collection of American paintings of today. Both of these important works have been lent to our exhibition. Private collections have

also been drawn upon for this interesting and timely show which will serve as a fitting introduction of the works of Fletcher Martin to Kansas City.

CHINESE ART IN KANSAS CITY COLLECTIONS: It is interesting to note that since the opening of the Gallery in 1933, a number of private collectors of Kansas City have turned their attention to the Orient. It is true that such pioneer collectors as Mrs. D. M. Lighton and Allen Logan had always been interested in Chinese art, but the important Oriental Department of the Gallery focused the attention on this field. The Wednesday Evening Lecture Series for the winter will be devoted to Oriental Art and it has been felt that an exhibition of Kansas City owned Chinese objects would be a fitting introduction to the course. The local collectors have been most generous in their response to requests for loans and the group will be installed in the South loan gallery, again with an opening on Sunday, September 28th.

Mr. H. C. Boyce is lending a 17th C. bronze Set of the Taoist Eight Immortals and an elaborate ivory Tibetan Ritual Collar. A group of the exquisite 17th and 18th century Jade Carvings that Mrs. Massey Holmes has collected over a period of years will also be included. Mr. and Mrs. H. V. Jones are lending a large series of pottery figures, including an important unglazed T'ang Horse, a Camel Driver and several Palace Ladies. Fine examples of Blanc de Chine Porcelain and a pottery Dancing Girl come from Mrs. James M. Kemper's collection.

A spirited Pottery Horse of the T'ang Dynasty is lent by Mrs. W.T. Kemper. Mrs. D. M. Lighton has contributed a selection of Horn Carvings, several fine Blanc de Chine Porcelains and a most important pair of sun dried clay Horses. These represent a small and little known group of tomb figures that seem to have come from Central Asia and were first discovered by Sir Aurel Stein. There is a single figure of the same clay of a Warrior in full armour in the permanent collection which came from the borders of Chinese Turkestan and it will also be shown.

From Mr. Allen Logan's collection will come a large K'o-ssu Hanging, a Ming lacquer Box, a pair of enamel Bowls, a Blanc de Chine Figure, several Ivories and a large group of T'ang figures including a Horse, Palace and Dancing Ladies and Musicians. Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Nichols are lending a large saddled T'ang Horse, a pair of Musicians mounted on horses, Palace Ladies, a fine porcelain Kwan Yin and a rare T'ang Pottery Elephant with candlesticks. A group of Mr. and Mrs. David Mackie's exquisite 18th C. snuff bottles will be included.

An 18th C. painting on silk of a Young Man and Lady in a Garden is lent by Mrs. Gerald Parker and an unglazed Pottery Horse from the early 7th C. by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Scofield. A group of small ivories from the Ming Dynasty and a bamboo carving of one of the Ho-Ho Twins comes from the collection of Mrs. M. R. Sickman. The exhibition will offer an interesting opportunity to see the many fine examples of Chinese Art owned privately in Kansas City and rarely available to the public.

MASTERPIECE OF THE MONTH: The Bronze Cauldron and Bell exhibited as Masterpiece of the Month for October are the first important additions to the collection of Chinese bronzes since the opening of the Gallery in 1933. They have been chosen to augment the collection because each one, in quite different ways, illustrates phases of the bronze age art heretofore not represented. The four-legged cauldron is an exceptional and handsome example of a powerful and fully-modeled style that came into favor near the end of the second millennium B.C. The strange spike-like bosses that cover the body and the heavy, knotted flanges that decorate the sides and edges, give an extraordinary impression of explosive energy. Two fully modeled dragons with flask-shaped horns on the handles add to this effect of the decoration almost breaking free from the surface of the vessel. Yet these elements are so successfully handled that the whole has a definitely architectural and completely unified structure.

It will be of great interest to students of Chinese history to know that this cauldron is inscribed with three characters that indicate this vessel was used for sacrificial offerings by one of China's oldest historical rulers, King Ch'eng, who

was the third ruler of the Chou dynasty. The orthodox chronology gives the dates of King Ch'eng as reigning from 1115 to 1079 B.C. It was only in the very early years of the Chou period (1122-251 B.C.) the the strong, highly sculptural and almost barbaric style so well illustrated by the new cauldron, was employed.

The second bronze is a beautiful bell of a kind used for the music that accompanied the sacrifices to the spirits of the ancestors, or furnished the accompaniment for pantomime dances. The bell was hung from the loop made by the strange monster on top that turns his head back and grasps its own tail in its mouth. It hung at a strong angle and was prevented from swinging from side to side by the weight of the heavy truncated cone of solid bronze on top. Unlike the cauldron mentioned above, the decoration is fairly flat. It is limited to bands of closely intertwined animals and a magnificent panel just above the lower edge and both sides. The design is rich and flamboyant, producing a beautiful play of light over the surface. It is obvious that this is quite a different kind of art from the powerful, tense and almost geometric style of the cauldron. Indeed, it was made almost six hundred years later, around 480 B.C., during the very lifetime of the great Chinese philosopher, Confucius. At that time the bronze-age art was enjoying a conscious renaissance. Old designs were revived and treated with a new and lively spirit. As may be seen on the lower panel of this bell, the forms twist in and out in a rich and complex pattern that has all the qualities of a pompous baroque. In this case, the spike-like bosses are supposed to have served the practical end of tuning the bell to the right tone after it was cast. This was done by filing down the ends of the spikes until the proper tone was obtained. The brilliant blue and green of the patina, or corrosion, due to long burial in the earth, is especially striking in this bell, though, of course, in its original state the bronze was probably a light silvery gray.

These two new bronzes form a particularly instructive contrast, because they represent quite different ideas -

the cauldron stands for an age when the forces of nature and the spirit world were controlled by sacrifices offered in vessels covered with magic symbols; the bell comes from a time when men were more interested in the world about them and designs were created more to delight the eye than to influence spirits. Each one is superlative of its kind, and each is the characteristic product of its age.

WEDNESDAY EVENING LECTURES: For the season of 1941-42, the Wednesday Evening Lectures will be devoted to a survey of Oriental Art. The first lecture will take place on October 15th and the series will be given by Laurence Sickman, Curator of Oriental Art. The prime importance of the Gallery's collection in this field has been recognized throughout the world and it will form an excellent background for the appreciation and enjoyment of the course. The lectures will be given in Atkins Auditorium at 8:00 P.M. and there is no admission to the Gallery of the lectures. They will be illustrated by slides, many of them in colour.

October 15: General Introduction to the Art of Eastern Asia, the Setting and Environment. The first lecture will illustrate the life and palaces of Peking, the remains of China's more ancient capitals in the historic Yellow River Valley, the grandeur of the natural scenery that has inspired China's painters. The geographic relation of China to India, the Near East, Korea and Japan - those countries that have influenced the art of China or have drawn most heavily from it - will be discussed. This lecture is designed to form a background for the more detailed art history to be covered in the series.

October 22: The Great City Shang and Art of the Bronze-Age. Shang-Yin, the earliest historical dynasty of China, opens the scene on one of the most highly evolved and sophisticated civilizations of ancient times. Their capital city with its lofty palaces and temples, its royal tombs stocked with vessels of bronze and sculpture in jade and marble, are discoveries of the last ten years.

October 29: The Art of the Chou Conquerors. In China the age of feudalism, with its codes of chivalry and contending princes, preceded that of Europe by over fifteen hundred years. The

impressive bronze-age art of the Shang dynasty continued but with strange and inexplicable innovations. The lecture covers the centuries from about 1000 B.C. down to the break-up of Chou rule and the time when the "Hundred Schools of Philosophy" arose to explain the ills of the dying feudalism.

CHINESE COURT COSTUMES: The colour and magnificence of Chinese court life during the 17th and 18th centuries has been recaptured in the exhibition which has just been installed in Gallery 24. Official robes of delicate tapestry weave (*k'ō-ssu*) or smooth satin ornamented with gold and fur are displayed in the group. There is also included a series of so-called "Mandarin Squares", the elaborately embroidered coat insignia which denoted the official court rank of the wearer. Ancestor portraits of noblemen and their wives complete the exhibition and reveal a composite picture of how these costumes and insignia originally appeared.

FRIENDS OF ART: At the request of the majority of the members, the study classes for the Friends of Art for this season will be held on the first and third Thursdays at eleven o'clock in the Library. The first meeting of the year will be on October 16th when the Director will discuss the paintings by Fletcher Martin with the members. Examples from the loan exhibition will be brought to the Library.

The Friends of Art will welcome to membership any Gallery friends who are interested in their program to build up a fine group of Contemporary American Paintings. Information on the advantages of membership can be secured from Mrs. H. V. Jones, Hi. 0772.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT: The winter session of the Saturday morning art appreciation classes for children will begin on October 11, enrollment taking place on the preceding Saturday, October 4th, at 10 a.m.

This year, classes will be offered in drawing, clay modeling, marionettes and hand-crafts for children from 7 years through the high school age. The class in the history and technique of printing for High School Junior and Seniors

will be repeated this winter, with a study of additional techniques. The advanced clay modeling class will be offered again, meeting on Saturday afternoons, from one to three o'clock.

A new class in Docentry for high school students only will be offered. It comprises a comprehensive study of the Gallery collection. This course, when successfully completed, qualified the docent as a Junior Guide, permitting him to take high school and special groups through on Saturdays or Sundays. This group will also meet on Saturday afternoons from one until two o'clock while the other classes will meet from ten until twelve in the morning.

The free Saturday afternoon programs for boys and girls will also be offered this winter, starting October 11th. They will be approximately an hour in length, beginning at three o'clock. The Game Tray for children will be in operation each Saturday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY EVENING OPENINGS: Commencing October 1st, the Gallery will again be open on Wednesday Evenings from seven until ten o'clock. There is no admission at this time.

SPECIAL GROUPS VISITING THE GALLERY: During October these three groups will make tours of the Gallery:

October 9th - Parent Teacher's Association Convention

October 15th - National Convention of Insurance Agents

October 21st - American Royal 4-H Club Members

CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

Wed., Oct. 1 - 8:00 - Lecture - Dr. Labunski
Sat., " 4 - 10:00 - Registration for Sat. Classes
Sat., " 4 - 3:00 - Auditorium - Children's Program
Sun., " 5 - 3:30 - Concert - WPA Orchestra
Tues., " 7 - 2:00 - Asiatic Study Group
Wed., " 8 - 8:00 - Recital - Ruth Fayman, Dancing
Thurs., " 9 - 10:00 - Library - Socractic Delphians
Thurs., " 9 - 1:30 - P.T.A. Convention Tour
Sat., " 11 - 3:00 - Auditorium - Children's Program
Sun., " 12 - 3:30 - Concert - Pupils of Amy Winning
Tues., " 14 - 1:00 - Library - Art Study Club
Wed., " 15 - 3:00 - National Convention of Insurance Agents Tour
Wed., " 15 - 8:00 - Lecture - General Introduction to the Art of Eastern Asia, Mr. Sickman
Thurs., " 16 - 11:00 - Library - Friends of Art
Sat., " 18 - 3:00 - Auditorium - Children's Program
Sun., " 19 - 3:30 - Concert - Conservatory of Music
Tues., " 21 - 10:00 - American Royal 4-H Clubs Tour
Tues., " 21 - 2:00 - Asiatic Study Group
Wed., " 22 - 8:00 - Lecture - The Great City of Shang And the Art of the Bronze-Age, Mr. Sickman
Thurs., " 23 - 10:00 - Library - Socractic Delphians
Sat., " 25 - 3:00 - Auditorium - Children's Program
Sun., " 26 - 3:30 - Concert - Pupils of Evaline Hartley
Tues., " 28 - 10:00 - Library - Book Club
Wed., " 29 - 8:00 - Lecture - The Art of the Chou Conquerors, Mr. Sickman



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William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art

Atkins Museum of Fine Arts

Kansas City, Mo.

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